

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

16th March 2022

Council Plan 2020 – 2025 Quarterly Progress Report Period under review: 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider progress on the delivery of the Council Plan 2020 - 2025 for the period as contained in the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council Plan Quarter 3 Performance Progress Report for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021 was considered and approved by Cabinet on 17th February 2022. The report provides an overview of progress of the key elements of the Council Plan, specifically in relation to performance against Key Business Measures (KBMs), strategic risks and workforce management. A separate Financial Monitoring report for the period covering both the revenue and capital budgets, reserves and delivery of the savings plan was presented and considered at the same Cabinet meeting.
- 1.2. This report draws on information extracted from both Cabinet reports to provide this Committee with information relevant to its remit.
- 1.3. Comprehensive performance reporting is now enabled through the following link to Power BI [OSC 2021/22 Performance Report.](#)

2. Council Plan 2020 - 2025: Strategic Context and Performance Commentary

2.1 The Council Plan 2020 – 2025 aims to achieve two high level Outcomes:

- **Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent;** and,
- **Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure.**

Progress to achieve these outcomes is assessed against 54 KBMs.

Outcome	No. of KBMs	No. of KBMs available for reporting at Quarter 3
Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent	27	23
Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure	13	8
WCC making the best use of its resources	14	12

2.2 Overall, the Council continues to maintain its robust performance across the board in the face of increased and changing demand, due to the ongoing and varying degree of impact of the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in significant changes in how services are delivered. Despite some restrictions being reintroduced Council Services are continuing to provide support to communities most in need but are now focusing more resource on their core work and less on specific pandemic response, which is now being reflected in KBM performance.

2.3 14 KBMs fall within the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.4 The education examination regime was suspended for the second year running in 2021 due to Covid-19. Therefore, the education performance for agreed measures as detailed below, cannot be reported at this time:

National Body	KBM
Dept of Education	% of children achieving GCSE level 4 in both English and Maths
	% of children achieving the KS2 expected standard for combined reading, writing and maths
	Progress 8 score

Eight proxy measures have been introduced for educational attainment to provide oversight in this area. Section 3 provides an Education progress summary based on recently published data.

2.5 A further KBM cannot be reported for Quarter 4 as data is not yet available:

- % of Year 6 children (aged 10-11 years): prevalence of obesity (including severely obese). This KBM has only recently been resumed, with a data sample too small at this stage for reporting.

- 2.6 Of the remaining 10 available for reporting at Quarter 3, 50% (5) are reported as being On Track and 50% (5) are reported as not being Not on Track.

Table 1 below summarises KBM status at Quarter 3 by agreed Outcomes.

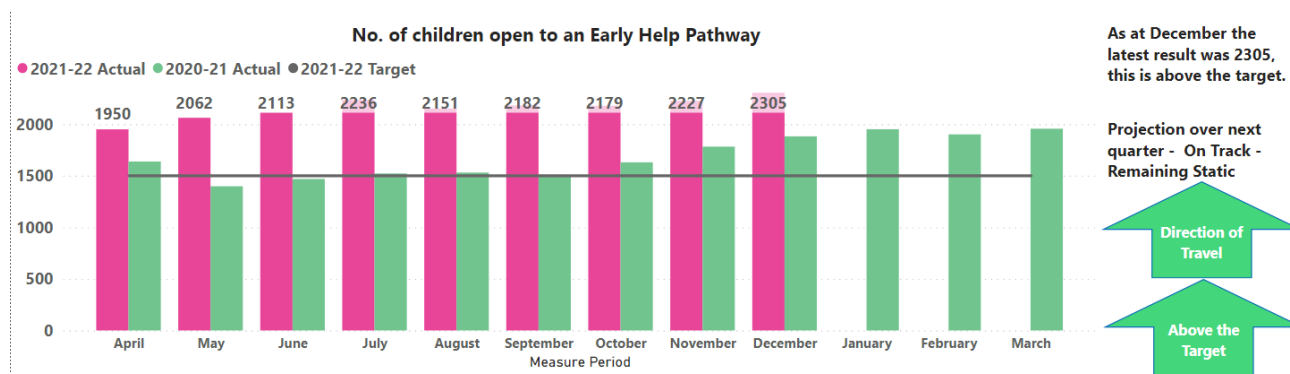
Outcome	Current Status	Number of measures
Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent	On Track	4
	Not on Track	5
	Not Applicable	1
Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure	On Track	1
	Not on Track	0
	Not Applicable	3
WCC making the best use of its resources	On Track	0
	Not on Track	0
	Not Applicable	0

Table 1

- 2.7 Of the 50% (5) KBMs which are On Track, there are 2 of note as Areas of Good Progress, which are detailed in Table 2 below.

Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent

No of children open to an Early Help Pathway



Current performance narrative:

The service has 2,182 children open to an Early Help Pathway to Change plan which is 659 above the target of 1500.

Improvement activity:

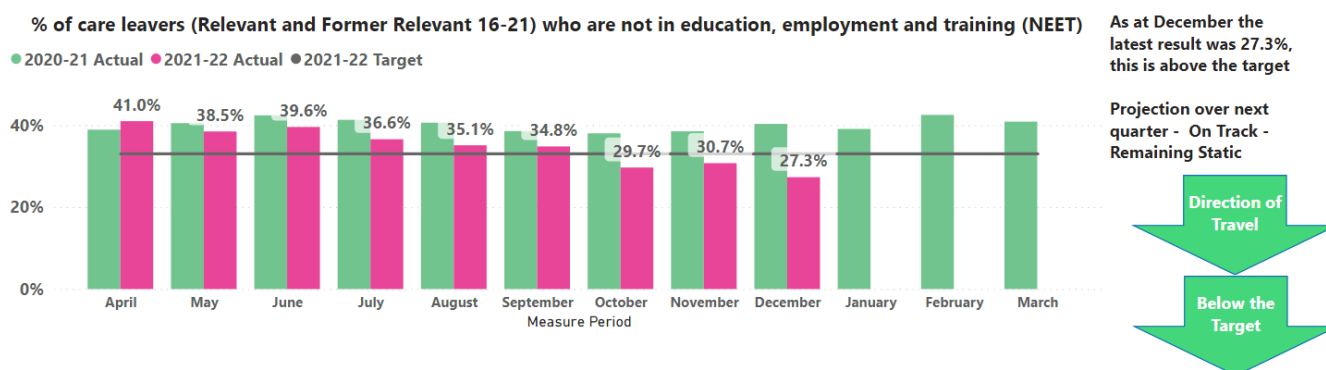
With the trajectory constantly increasing, the service will re-evaluate the target of 1,500 for a more realistic higher one.

The service will continue to deliver consistent messaging to schools and other partners and the redesign work in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub will support further improvements.

Explanation of projected trajectory: On Track – Remaining Static

Increased demand is consistent with the impact of Covid-19 upon families, based on trend information performance is expected to remain static.

% of care leavers (Relevant and Former Relevant 16-21) who are not in education, employment and training (NEET)



Current performance narrative:

The number of young people not in education, employment and training has dropped considerably this quarter and Warwickshire are well below the target of 33%, this is particularly impressive, having started the financial year at 41% and the fact that numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) have risen to the highest they have been for many years. Clearly when these young people arrive, they are not in education or employment, so it would not have been surprising if the figure had actually risen.

Improvement activity:

The addition of an extra Carers Advisor and a dedicated Carers Advisor for UASC young people has enabled NEETS groups to be expanded and there to be a real focus on this area.

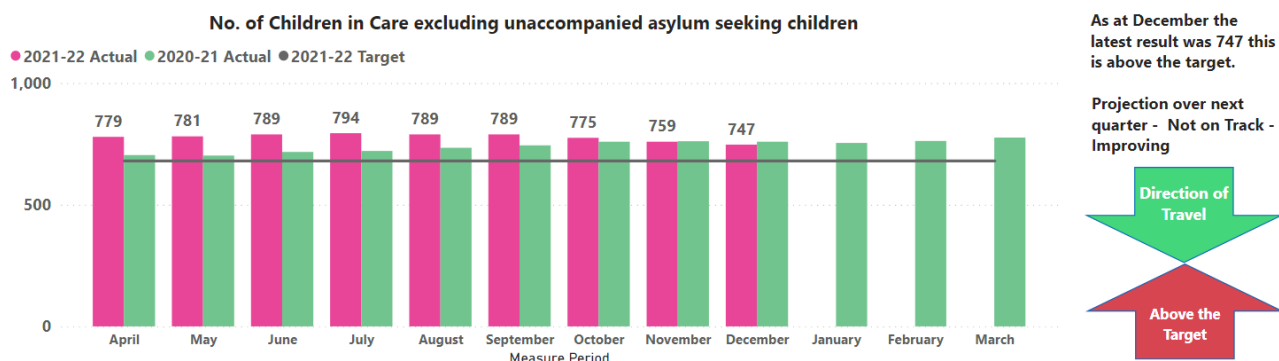
Explanation of projected trajectory: On Track – Remaining Static.

The service has managed to improve on this area significantly and have returned to a figure that is as good if not better than pre covid. If the economy and job opportunities remain fairly stable, the service would expect to see this figure stabilising and possibly improving further.

2.8 Of the 50% (5) KBMs Not on Track, there is 1 KBM which requires Improvement Activity, as detailed in Table 3 below.

Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent

No of Children in Care (CiC) excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children



Current performance narrative:

This month Warwickshire have seen a fall of 15 in Children in Care numbers and 43 in the quarter. While Warwickshire remain above target for the year, the service believes there will be further falls in Child in Care numbers in January and February.

Improvement activity:

All change programme projects are now implemented which appear to have slowed down the numbers of children entering care. The service continues to work closely with the local courts to bring down the backlog of work in court, which is speeding up discharges and the making of special guardianship orders, child arrangement orders and adoptions

Explanation of the projected trajectory: Not on Track – Improving

There are a significant number of young people that will turn 18 between January and March 2022. Twelve young people are currently placed for adoption who should achieve permanence through adoption.

Table 3

2.9 Table 4 below illustrates the considered forecast performance projection over the forthcoming reporting period.

	On Track			Not on Track			Not Applicable
	Improving	Remaining Static	Declining	Improving	Remaining Static	Declining	
Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent	2	2		2	3		1
Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure		1					3

Table 4

It is forecast that over the next period of Quarter 4 2021/22, 2 of the KBMS currently reporting as being On Track, will continue to improve, and 3 will remain static, these are:

Improving:

- % of Children in Care aged under 16 who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years, who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption; and,
- % Population vaccination coverage – Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) for two doses (5 years old).

Remaining Static:

- No. of children open to an Early Help Pathway;
- % of care leavers (Relevant and Former Relevant 16-21) who are not in education, employment and training (NEET); and,
- % 16 and 17 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training.

Of the KBMs which are Not on Track, 2 are expected to begin to show signs of improvement, and 3 are expected to remain static during Quarter 4, these are:

Improving:

- No of Children in Care excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children; and,
- % of placements in provision (agency foster care or residential) of Good or Outstanding quality as rated by Ofsted (CLA).

Remaining Static:

- % of Children receiving a 6-8 week health check (C8i) ;
- % of children and young people seen within 18 weeks (Referral to Treatment Time) amalgamated across the three Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs); and,
- % of Women who smoke at the time of delivery across Warwickshire.

2.10 The Pandemic continues to impact on a proportion of these measures leading to delays in programmes of activity and both additional and frequently changing service demands. Improvement activity is in place to improve performance across all measures, and this is under constant review to ensure it is robust. Full context on all measures is provided in the [Power BI report](#).

2.11 The Council is developing a new performance management framework alongside the Council Plan refresh, which aims to provide a sharpened focus on performance and trajectory and will better support delivery of the Organisation's new priorities as outlined in the refreshed Council Plan. A Members Working Group (MWG) has been supporting the development of the new Framework and Cabinet will receive a full report, including the recommendations from the MWG and the full proposed Performance Management Framework, in March.

3.0 Education Progress Update 2021 refer to section 2.4

3.1 Assessments for 2021

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the summer exam series for the 2020/21 academic year was cancelled.

Instead, for 2020/21, Key Stage 4 and post 16 pupils were only assessed on the content they had been taught for each course. Schools were given flexibility to decide how to assess their pupils' performance, for example, through mock exams, class tests, and non-exam assessment already completed. GCSE grades were then determined by teachers based on the range of evidence available and they are referred to as teacher-assessed grades, or TAGs.

This was a different process to that of 2019/20 when pupils were awarded either a centre assessment grade (known as CAGs, based on what the school or college believed the pupil would most likely have achieved had exams gone ahead) or their calculated grade using a model developed by Ofqual - whichever was the higher of the two.

The changes to the way GCSE grades have been awarded over the last two years (with CAGs and TAGs replacing exams) means 2020/21 pupil attainment data cannot be directly compared to pupil attainment data from previous years for the purposes of measuring year on year changes in pupil performance.

3.2 Proxy measures for 2020 and 2021

For 2020 and 2021 school performance data proxy measures have been used for WCC reporting purposes. The proxy measures are based on Department for Education (DfE) published data for Key Stage 4 and is available at county level only (individual school level data is not available). Comparisons are available to national and statistical neighbours¹ (similar councils) only. There is no data available for Early Years or Key Stage 2 (primary school data).

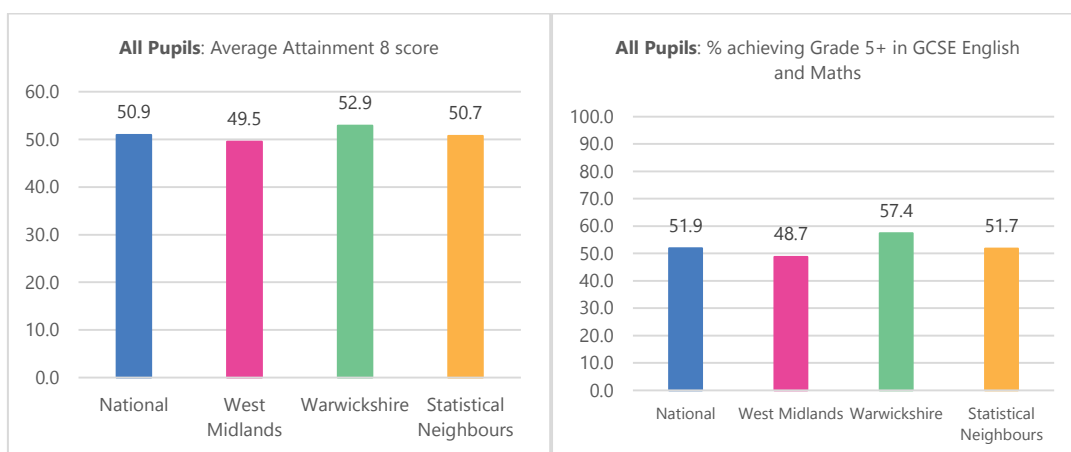
3.3 Proxy measure Key Stage 4 performance 2021

Table 5 shows 2021 Key Stage 4 Results. Due to the changes in the way GCSE results have been awarded in the summers of 2020 and 2021 there have been significant changes to the distribution of the grades which reflect the likely change in method for awarding grades rather than demonstrating a step change in standards. For the reasons set out in section one 2021 results cannot be compared to other years.

Region	Characteristic	Total number of pupils at the end of key stage 4	Average Attainment 8 score of all pupils	% of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	% of pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	Average English Baccalaureate Average Point Score per pupil
National	All Pupils	575863	50.9	51.9	72.2	4.5
West Midlands	All Pupils	65625	49.5	48.7	69.5	4.3
Warwickshire	All Pupils	6225	52.9	57.4	76.3	4.7
Statistical Neighbours	All Pupils	6594	50.7	51.7	73.0	4.4

Table 5: 2021 Key Stage 4 Results – All pupils

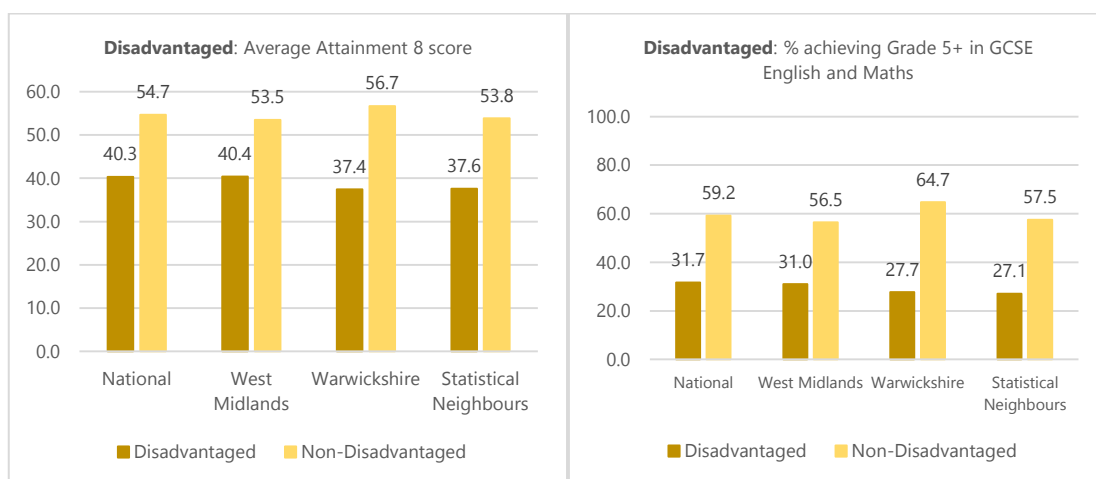
¹ Statistical Neighbours are those local authorities deemed to have similar characteristics and used for benchmarking purposes. Warwickshire's 10 statistical neighbours are Cheshire West and Chester; Worcestershire; Central Bedfordshire; Leicestershire; Staffordshire; Warrington; Cheshire East; Essex; Hampshire; North Somerset.



Overall Warwickshire out-performs national, statistical neighbours and West Midlands.

Region	Characteristic	Total number of pupils at the end of key stage 4	Average Attainment 8 score of all pupils	% of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	% of pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	Average English Baccalaureate Average Point Score per pupil
National	Disadvantaged	151973	40.3	31.7	53.1	3.4
	Non-Disadvantaged	423890	54.7	59.2	79.0	4.8
West Midlands	Disadvantaged	20062	40.4	31.0	52.5	3.4
	Non-Disadvantaged	45563	53.5	56.5	77.1	4.7
Warwickshire	Disadvantaged	1218	37.4	27.7	49.5	3.1
	Non-Disadvantaged	5007	56.7	64.7	82.8	5.0
Statistical Neighbours	Disadvantaged	1261	37.6	27.1	48.9	3.1
	Non-Disadvantaged	5334	53.8	57.5	78.7	4.7

Table 6: 2021 Key Stage 4 Results – Disadvantaged pupils



In 2021 Warwickshire disadvantage pupils fall behind the comparators in almost all of the measures (the only exception is statistical neighbours for % disadvantaged pupils achieving GCSEs grade 4 or higher and grade 5 or higher in English and maths). This follows previous years patterns and reinforces the need for Warwickshire's continued focus on disadvantaged learners in Warwickshire.

3.4 2021 Contextual information

3.5 Attendance in 2020/21

Pupil attendance across the 2020/21 academic year remained high at just over 95%, testament to the hard work and measures put in place by schools to remain open and keep staff and pupils safe. Even during the national lockdown between January and March 2021, schools were open to key worker and vulnerable children whilst also running virtual lessons for children at home, ensuring a continuity of education.

3.6 Remote learning in 2020/21

DfE provided laptops to schools to support students to access remote learning from home (based on Free School Meal pupils). Warwickshire County Council complemented the DfE laptop scheme distributing over 3,200 Laptops and 926 dongles to special schools, infant schools, vulnerable young people, and pupils without access to laptops or broadband data allowances at home.

3.7 Pupil mental health

Many pupils managed well during periods of lockdown and adjusted to remote learning. However, there is no doubt that mental health issues are more prevalent among pupils and increased anxiety about examinations.

3.8 School staff mental health

There has been an increase in absence of staff in schools due to Covid-19 infections and self-isolation. Headteachers have reported significant difficulties in sourcing supply cover and increased pressures on school budgets because of these additional cover costs.

More recently Warwickshire has seen increased numbers of experienced staff and in particular experienced head teachers leaving the profession due to the pressures the pandemic has had on their roles. By necessity since the beginning of the pandemic the head teacher role has changed to be more operational.

3.9 Disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils

Many children particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, or who are vulnerable in other ways have been adversely affected by extended time away from school.

3.10 Performance pre pandemic in 2019

Performance of Warwickshire children and young people in Statutory National Tests in 2019 were reported to Children's & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 14th July 2020. Summary information is shared below.

3.11 Table 7 below provides a summary of the available key headline indicators for the different curriculum stages achieved by Warwickshire pupils in 2019 compared to those nationally and our statistical neighbours:

WE Strategy ²	National Curriculum Stage	Headline Measure	Warwickshire	National	Statistical neighbours (SN) ²
WE1: Early Years Foundation Stage	Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	% of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development - often used as a school readiness measure	72%	72%	74%
WE3: Family of Schools	Phonics	% of Year 1 pupils working at the required level	84%	82%	83%
	Key Stage 1	% of pupils achieving the Expected Standard in Reading	77%	75%	77%
		% of pupils achieving the Expected Standard in Writing	71%	69%	71%
		% of pupils achieving the Expected Standard in Maths	77%	76%	77%
	Key Stage 2	% of pupils achieving the Expected Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths	65%	65%	66%
	Key Stage 4	% of pupils achieving a Strong Pass (Grade5+) in English and Maths GCSEs	50%	43%	43%
		Average Attainment 8 Score per pupil	49.8	46.5	46.4
		Average Progress 8 Score	0.00	-0.03	-0.10

² Warwickshire Education Strategy available here:
<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/educationstrategy>

WE4: Employability	Post 16	A Level students: Average grade	C+	C+	C+
		A Level students: Percentage achieving AAB or higher in at least 2 facilitating subjects	16.4%	14.1%	12.4%
		Tech level students: Average grade	Merit	Merit+	Merit+
		Applied General students: Average grade	Merit+	Merit+	Merit+

Table 7: Headline 2019 measures and results for Warwickshire, national and statistical neighbours

3.12 2019 Key trends

In 2019 the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is exactly in line with the national result, all the other Key Stage 2 (Primary) school headline indicators are above or in line with the national averages.

In 2019 Key Stage 4 results continued to show that Warwickshire's students performed strongly in their GCSE and equivalent qualifications, compared to national and statistical neighbour results.

- Data showed an upwards trend in the ranking for Attainment 8, with Warwickshire improving its position the last two years running, moving up six places in total, from 31st place nationally in 2017 and 29th in 2018.
- Progress 8 dropped from previous years - from 43rd in 2018 and 42nd in 2017, this brings us in line with West Midland Local Authorities.
- Warwickshire improved one place on its 2018 ranking for the EBacc average point score, moving from 33rd to 32nd.

3.13 2019 Key issues

3.14 Closing the Gap

Disadvantage attainment gaps have not been closing in Warwickshire which is in line with the national picture. The full impact of Covid-19 will not be apparent for some time

A review of the Closing the Gap Board is being undertaken. It recognises that the attainment gap still exists and has not reduced. There are many external influences which are out of the boards remit e.g. economic, Covid-19 etc.

3.15 School improvement support for recovery from the impact of the pandemic

The School Improvement Team's focus is on recovery and catch up for 2021. The Department for Education Monitoring and Brokering grant was ring fenced from July 2021 to support school's recovery from the ongoing impact of the pandemic. The Team has provided a wide range of support, training, wellbeing, headteacher retention, pupil attendance and Continuous Professional Development programmes for schools. Attendance at programmes has been supported by providing staff cover costs for schools.

e.g. aspiring headteacher course, CHIMP for schools (a mind management model to support wellbeing), peer coaching programme for head teachers, EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) tiered approach programme, listening ear programme of support, Breaking the Glass ceiling of good programme plus many more. Schools who have found themselves in exceptional circumstances have been supported with additional funding to support staffing costs and additional system leader support depending on the support needed. Within this work there is a focus on disadvantaged learners who will have been adversely affected by the pandemic and extended time away from schools.

4. Financial Commentary

4.1. Revenue Budget

4.1.1. The Council has set the performance threshold in relation to revenue spend as zero overspend and no more than a 2% underspend. The following Table 8 shows the forecast position for the Services concerned.

Service Area	Approved Budget	Service Forecast	(Under) /Over spend	Variation as a % of budget	Change from Q2 forecast	Represented by:				Remaining service variance as a % of budget	Remaining Service Change from Q2 forecast
						Investment Funds	Impact on Earmarked Reserves	Covid Impact	Remaining Service Variance		
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m
Education Services - Non-DSG Children & Families	41.270	45.427	4.157	10.07%	1.549	0.713	0.210	0.594	2.640	6.40%	0.932
	74.701	80.493	5.792	7.75%	0.460	(1.007)	(0.313)	2.112	5.000	6.69%	0.432
Total	115.971	125.92	9.949	8.58%	2.009	(0.294)	(0.103)	2.706	7.640	6.59%	1.364

Table 8

4.1.2. Covid

Children and Families forecast £9.949m overspend including £2.706m Covid pressures at the end of Quarter 3. The Covid pressures relate to additional placement/leaving care costs and staffing cost and will be fully funded from Covid grant income.

4.1.3. Investments

The overall Children Transformation Fund (CTF) / Child Friendly Warwickshire Transformation Programme has experienced delay due to recruitment and interaction with 3rd sector partners taking longer than anticipated (often due to capacity and the post Covid effect on partners). Although the forecast underspend for 2021/22 is £1.007m, the project leads are continually reviewing

plans to ensure the overall 4 year programme to 2023/24 is on track to complete the objectives and fully maximise the DfE grant. The overall planned budget is fully committed over the re-phased life of the programme.

Education is forecast to overspend by £0.713m and relates to investment activity primarily on phase two of the SEND and Inclusion Change Programme and in January Cabinet approved the draw down from earmarked reserves to fund the programme.

4.1.4. Remaining Service Overspend

After taking account of Covid and the impact of earmarked reserves and Investment/Transformation Funds, the remaining service overspend is £7.640m (an increase of £1.364m since Quarter 2).

The material aspects of the remaining overspend are attributable to the following factors, further details can be found in the Quarter 3 Finance Monitoring report -

Children and Families remaining service overspend of £5m (increase from Quarter 2 of £0.432m)

- The variance mainly consists of an overspend on placements of £3.700m (Quarter 2 £3.382m) and staffing of £2.465m (Quarter 2 £2.601m), offset by some underspends, including a part year underspend of £0.464m resulting from the new internal children's home opening part way through the financial year.
- The service continues to carry out work on a number of areas to address the placements overspend including initiatives to rebalance the 'Placement Mix'; recruiting and retaining internal foster carers; the opening of our own children's home; Early Help wrap around services to children-in-need families; and wrap around support to foster carers to assist in stepdown from residential care. In addition, the service is working with commissioning colleagues to explore other placement options.

Education remaining service overspend of £2.640m (increase from Quarter 2 of £0.932m)

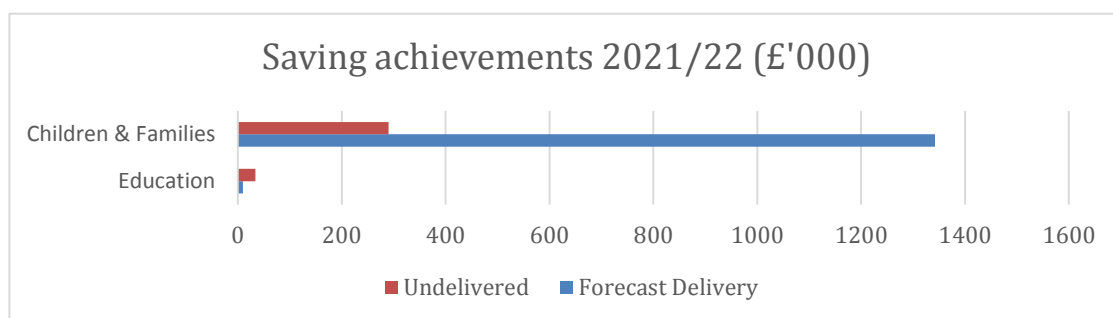
- The primary driver of this overspend is the Children with Disabilities (CwD) forecast overspend of £2.073m (an increase of £0.203m since Quarter 2). The service incurs high unit costs from increasingly complex needs for which the supply of high-quality specialist placements is low; and the use of emergency placements which can be both necessary and expensive. There is continued work to commission cost-beneficial spot contracts; to review strategies and

options to secure quality and affordable placements and to move and maintain more children at Early Help stage.

- The increase from Quarter 2 is mainly driven by a large increase in projected expenditure on mainstream transport for pupils. The new academic year has triggered a large change in demand (post Quarter 2) of £1.358m. As a result of this significant change a review has been instigated by the Strategic Director for Communities to review the process for projecting and reviewing demand and expenditure (especially for the early months of the financial year, prior to the commencement of the new academic year).

4.2. Delivery of the Savings Plan

4.2.1. The savings targets and forecast outturn for the Services are shown below in Chart.



Of the five Children & Families saving plans two are expected to deliver with three having forecasted a shortfall at Quarter 3 totalling to £0.290m (17.7% of the target).

Education has two saving plans for the current financial year totalling to £0.044m, the service is forecasting not to achieve £0.034m in relation to savings on third party spend.

4.3 Capital Programme

4.3.1. Table 9 below shows the approved capital budget for the Services, new schemes, and any delay into future years.

Service	Approved	New projects in year	Budget Reprofile	Net over / underspend	Total capital programme	Delays	Forecast In year capital spend	Delays %
	2021-22 capital programme							
	£'000							
Education Services	32,514	1,362	0	(224)	33,652	0	33,652	0%
Children & Families	492	0	0	0	492	0	492	0%

Table 9

The current economic situation, both nationally and internationally post Covid-19, is likely to have an impact on the delivery of the capital programme in the short to medium term. Inflation, material shortages and supply chain issues are creating uncertainty and a challenging delivery environment.

5.0 Management of Risk

- 5.1 Strategic risks were updated and assessed by Corporate Board in January 2022. Those strategic risks that align to the Committee's remit and Council Plan priority areas are reported at Appendix A, along with mitigation strategies and an indication of the direction of travel for each risk.
- 5.2 All service risk registers were also updated by Assistant Directors and service risk owners in January. The highest rated risks and movements in risk levels are then reported to respective Directorate Leadership Teams for senior leader oversight and assurance on mitigation actions. Directorate level risk reporting will continue to evolve in 2022/23, making use of Power BI to report aggregated risk and provide a facility to drill down to risk register information.
- 5.3 Strategic areas of risk that are assessed as high (red rating) or with increasing levels of residual risk due to a challenging external environment include:
 - The risk that inequalities, which were compounded by the Pandemic across a range of social, economic, education and well-being indicators, are sustained with cost-of-living increases, despite targeted catch up activity in schools, social care, community health & well-being and support for businesses.
 - The risk of ongoing pressure on SEND resources and targeted services to support the increasing population of students with Education Health Care Plans continues to present service delivery and financial challenges. These are being addressed through the SEND programme and Medium term

Financial Strategy, including actions to address improvement areas identified in Ofsted's SEND Local Area Inspection.

5.4 There are Council wide strategic risk themes which impact on delivery of services for Children and Young People:

- The sustained risk of inflationary pressures putting pressure on direct costs, service budgets, service continuity and affordability; and
- Workforce resilience and impact on service capacity and individual well being, particularly in customer contact roles.

6. Supporting Papers

A copy of the full report and supporting documents that went to Cabinet on the 17th February is available via the committee system.

7. Environmental Implications

None specific to this report.

8. Background Papers

None

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